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THE HUNT FOR HAMILTON'S MOTHER.

BY GERTRUDE ATHERTON.

To the old friends of Hamilton and to the new ones whom I may be so fortunate as to have made for him, is due the story in detail of my search through the West Indian records for certain important facts connected with his birth and maternal ancestry. Great generosity has been shown in taking the truth of my statements for granted; the few reviewers who have questioned my integrity have been hostile on general principles. And just here I will make the only reply necessary to those of my critics who have grumbled loudly over the disconcerting form of "The Conqueror": that "it is neither a novel nor a biography," that "it is impossible to tell where fiction ends and history begins," that, in short, a book which purports to deal with facts should not be so embellished as to confuse the inquiring mind. Indeed, it shouldn't; and, if I had been writing the first biography of Hamilton instead of the seventh or eighth, my method would have been unpardonable. Those who profess such anxiety to have the truth and nothing but the truth about Alexander Hamilton, have had the successive works of half a century to draw upon. There are the first and second volumes of the "Life," begun by John Church Hamilton, afterward rewritten and continued in the "History of the Republic"—seven very large volumes; Morse's "Alexander Hamilton," in two volumes; Lodge's interesting monograph in the American Statesmen Series; Conant's brief but satisfactory study; and the others of less importance. It seemed to me that the work of the next biographer was, not to do the same old thing in the same old way, but to give the *man*; furthermore, to write a life that would stand a chance of being read. (My humble ambition was to give Hamilton back to the American people.) Of course, this object might have been ac-

complished by the historical-novel method, but in that form history is invariably sacrificed; and the history of our political genesis is not only as important as any one of the men who made it, but from 1776 to 1800 is indissolubly bound up with Alexander Hamilton. Therefore, in spite of a due appreciation of the conservatism of my kind, I determined to turn from the honored forms of biography and the novel, and to use the form of *Life*, even those abrupt transitions from grave to gay, from political affairs to social frivolities, so well known to all but novelists and the reviewers of novels; writing, in fact, as if I had stood beside Hamilton throughout his life, discarding only those wearisome details we all turn to books to forget; quieting such apprehensions as may have beset me, with the reflection that those who disapproved could let it alone. To the devil with the old fogies, anyway!

Before I sailed for the West Indies, I was in possession of these alleged facts, stated by J. C. Hamilton and copied without question by the condensers of his voluminous work: that Hamilton's maternal grandfather was a Frenchman named Faucette, who had fled from France after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, and subsequently become a doctor of wealth and consequence on the Island of Nevis, British West Indies; that one of Faucette's daughters had, when very young, been persuaded by her mother to marry a wealthy Dane named Lavine, who ill-treated her; that this daughter had obtained a divorce from Lavine and afterward married James Hamilton, a merchant from Scotland, living on the Island of St. Christopher (now officially known as St. Kitts) British West Indies; that the result of this union was the Alexander Hamilton of our history; that James Hamilton was a failure in business; that Mrs. Hamilton died when Alexander was very young, leaving him to the charity of her sisters, (presumably, from other evidence) Mrs. Peter Lytton, and Mrs. Mitchell, of the Island of St. Croix, Danish West Indies; that the Rev. Hugh Knox, of one of these islands (according to Lodge, the Island was Nevis), had taken an interest in his education, and given him letters of introduction to prominent men in the American colonies; that James Hamilton died on the Island of St. Vincent in the year 1799. There was also the information, doubtless reiterated many times by Hamilton, that his mother was a woman of great beauty, brilliancy, and accomplishments, and that he

owed his genius to her. But not a word of her first name—nothing, in short, beyond these meagre statements, except the one incontrovertible fact that Hamilton, while on St. Croix, had worked in the store of Nicolas Cruger. The correspondence preserved proved this; but Hamilton's life until the age of twelve, and his mother's before him, were almost black with mystery.

The State Department gave me a circular letter to our consuls in the West Indies asking them to help me, and my lawyer instructed me as to the best plan of work when I reached the ground. Before leaving, I went to the New York Society of Historical Research, and asked the librarian if his institution had *never* sent any one to the Islands to find the facts of the birth and ancestry of the most remarkable man in our history. I did not care to go on a fool's errand. He told me that nothing had been done. I had already made up my mind that the Hamilton descendants knew no more than had been given to the public.

I sailed with my friend, Miss Constant Lounsbury, the poet, by the Quebec S. S. line, in February, 1901, and after touching at St. Thomas and St. Croix, landed at St. Kitts. I had intended to begin researches on Nevis; but, learning that the discomforts of living on that once wealthy and famous island were not to be ignored by the most enthusiastic searcher after truth, I abandoned my first intention to land there, and made my headquarters on the neighboring and delightful Island of St. Kitts. The town of Basseterre on this island, is eleven miles from Charles Town on Nevis, although at extreme points the islands are but two miles apart. To-day, Nevis, once the "Mother of the Leeward Caribbees," is but an annex of St. Kitts, having neither Administrator nor Registrar of her own.

My coming was expected and several of the leading people of the island, besides four clergymen, immediately called, and, with that spontaneous generosity which seems to be a divine gift to isolated regions, offered me their help. They were all interested, but all equally sure that I could accomplish nothing: "others had tried and failed." Finally, I asked, "What others? Who has been here?" "No one has been here, but several have written." My disquiet passed. I have lived sufficiently to know that you have got to do your own work. Deputies may be amiable, but they are languid.

"Of course, you know that he is illegitimate," one and all re-

marked. "That is what I have come to prove or disprove. His biographers assert that his mother was divorced, and remarried. John Adams called him the 'bastard brat of a Scotch peddler.' Lodge, in an appendix, gives an extract from the Pickering MSS., which insinuates that he was the natural brother of Edward Stevens of St. Croix—so strong was the resemblance between the two boys, and so many the rumors of the time. The truth must lie somewhere in these records; and I also shall ascertain if there were any divorce laws in the islands in the eighteenth century." But this was not the worst. They usually added: "But — of course—you know—he was colored."

The first time this was flung at me, I will confess I was almost ill. Not to prove a truth of this sort had I undertaken a long and difficult journey. Were it a truth, the journey would be for nothing, for I would not write the biography. I admire Booker Washington, and I wish the colored race all the success that it deserves; but inherited instincts are the strongest in us, and both enthusiasm and imagination would shrivel were I obliged to accept as a fact that Alexander Hamilton had negro blood in him.

But I soon laid the ghost. To-day in the West Indies there is, perhaps, no illegitimate person who is not colored, and for that reason West Indians jump at the conclusion that all illegitimate children are and have been colored. This may not be logical, but it is natural. They do not stop to remember that in the eighteenth century the upper classes of the Islands had the morals of Europe, or that many highly respected members of the fashionable society of their predecessors were living in unmarried loyalty as late as 1850. The report probably had its origin in one of two causes: either some Alexander Hamilton, the son of one of the many Hamiltons of the time, and a slave, distinguished himself locally, and his reputation became confused with that of the famous American; or Hamilton, being known in the United States as a creole, suffered correspondingly in the minds of ignorant people, and the story travelled back to the Islands. If Hamilton had had colored blood in him, he would have had several coal-black descendants before this; such being the freakish law of Nature. But my subsequent discoveries alone would have disproved this cruel story, for his mother's relatives were, one and all, people of consequence, and in that day the negro was a slave and nothing more.

The consul at St. Kitts, Dr. Haven, introduced me to the Registrar, and recommended to me a professional searcher of records. The Registrar, Mr. Latouche, placed the records of St. Kitts and Nevis at my disposal, and I sent my searcher over to the mother island to go through the records for any information concerning the names, Hamilton, Lavine, Faucette, Lytton, Mitchell, and Knox. I would follow him in a day or two.

A sail-boat laden with negroes and cargo plies daily between the two islands. In squalls it turns upside down, for the sails are heavy enough for a boat twice its size. Mr. Outerbridge, the manager of the Quebec line, had given me a letter to his agent, who selected a fine day and chartered the boat for us. In consequence, Miss Lounsbery and I sailed over unattended by negroes or cargo. The boat stood on its beam ends all the way, and there was no place in particular to sit on, but it was cool and stirring and we made no lament. Mr. Greaves, the vice-consul met us, and after some hours I unearthed my searcher. He had discovered nothing, and I sent him back to St. Kitts to go through the records there. The next morning, I went to the Court House and sat down to the records myself. Mr. Greaves, Mr. Mercier, the clerk, and Miss Lounsbery all helped me at times. There being no index to assist me to immediate discoveries, I read page after page of these strange old records, in order to get the social history of the island in the eighteenth century. I never expect to see anything like them again. They were burnt by fire, and yellow and spotted by damp. They smelt like opium and broke at the touch. Most of them had not been opened for nearly a century, and there was danger that, like an old corpse, they would disappear upon contact with the air.

For a time I found nothing that I had come in search of, but I did discover that two-thirds of the great families of the time were named Hamilton; and this fact gives us James Hamilton's reason for coming to the West Indies in search of fortune. Hope in relatives is one of the permanent delusions of the human heart.

Suddenly the clerk uttered an exclamation, and laid before me a fragment on which was written a number of names, the sole remnant of a long-gone index. One of the names was Fawcett.

I immediately took over the volume to which this brittle scrap had clung, and went through it page by page. It was a very big volume and the thermometer stood at 85 degrees. My mind may

have wandered, for I finished the volume and found nothing. I worked backward, and this time I found a deed of separation between John and Mary Fawcett, dated February 5, 1740. I studied it attentively, and could read that they had been people of considerable importance, that there had been trouble in bringing John to terms, but that Mary had used her influence with the Captain-General and induced him to issue a writ of supplicavit for a separate maintenance. The husband had finally agreed, or was forced, to separate her property from his, and she resigned all her rights of dower in lieu of a yearly stipend. But there was no mention of any children. On the following day, Mr. Mercier found in another volume a splinter of index on which was written the one word Fawcett. I searched that volume and found that in 1714 one Captain Frank Keynall had left a piece of property on Nevis to John and Mary Fawcett. In that way I ascertained that the couple had been married at least twenty-six years when they separated.

On a part of Nevis called Gingerland, Mr. Greaves told me, was a negro village named Fawcett. The inhabitants of this village were undoubtedly the descendants of the slaves who had been freed in the general emancipation of 1834, and had taken the name of their former owners. There was no trace of any other Fawcetts in the records. Beyond this I could find nothing, no further deeds relating to my people, no will made by either Fawcett, no mention of James Hamilton, nor of Lavines, Lytons or Mitchells.

I spent four days on this island, and with the help of my friends read every church register extant, and explored every cemetery. The registers in the parish of Charles Town, where Hamilton was born, were destroyed by the French in 1780, and the others told nothing. The inscriptions in the church-yards—where the brambles choked the pathways—were almost all obliterated by time, for they had been cut in the sand-stone of the island. Many of the monuments have crumbled long since.

Meanwhile, I was haunted by a story which I had been told almost immediately upon arriving in Charles Town, that Hamilton had been the son of a Miss Hamilton and a planter from one of the other islands. About the year 1806, some one, living in Demerara, had written a sketch of Hamilton, containing this statement, asserted with authority. This pamphlet had been

in the possession of the one hotel-keeper of Nevis until a few years ago, when it was appropriated by an enterprising American. At that time I had not read Hamilton's correspondence, nor the extracts from the "Historical and Genealogical Memoirs of the House of Hamilton," of which there is no copy in this country; but I had read the extracts given by Lodge from the Pickering MSS., and for all I then knew James Hamilton might be one of the myths to be disposed of. Perhaps my mind was the more open to doubt because I promptly disproved one other of J. C. Hamilton's positive assertions.

Mr. Libord, the only lawyer of Nevis, had hunted up an old book on whose title page was the following legend: "Substance of the three reports of the Commissioners of Inquiry into the Administration of Civil and Criminal Justice in the West Indies. Extracted from the Parliamentary papers, with the General Conclusions of the Commissioner's Scheme of Improvement, Complete and in full. London, Joseph Butterworth & Son, 43 Fleet Street. 1827." In this book I learned that there had been no law for divorce or separate maintenance in the Islands. My lawyer had told me that this would be an important point to establish, for in England at that time divorce could be obtained only by a private act of Parliament, a proceeding which involved thousands of pounds and immense influence. Although this discovery mattered nothing in the light of subsequent findings, it served its purpose at the moment in shaking my faith in J. C. Hamilton; and the feminine mind lapses naturally to the conclusion that if the masculine has one weak spot it may have others. Perhaps if the new story had interested me less, I might have reflected that some men lie only when they think they must and are truthful when it is convenient.

But the story, indeed, took a strong hold upon my imagination. and in the four long nights on Nevis, when less romantic invaders kept me awake, I wove a tale which was very much to my taste. The Miss Hamilton was a daughter of one of the great planters and had loved a certain Mr. Stevens of St. Croix. Her father presented her with a house down by the sea and enough to keep her alive. Here she lived until Alexander was five years old, disinherited and deserted by all but Stevens, who came over occasionally. (I knew less of the easy morals of the day than I did after a more exhaustive study). By this time, she cared little

for Stevens, and Alexander was the absorbing passion of her life, her natural maternal instinct being intensified by her solitary existence. Finally, Stevens came to her and offered to bring Alexander up in his own family, concealing from the world and the child the secret of his birth, and giving him an equal chance in life with his own children. She could come and live on St. Croix under another name, and see him as often as she wished—after he had forgotten her. For the sake of the child's future she consented, and Alexander grew up regarding her as a sort of fairy god-mother, fond of her, and not suspecting the relationship. When he left for the United States, Stevens permitted her to follow him, and throughout his lifetime she was his intimate friend and confidante. This is the point: She was to tell the story after his death. Being beautiful and brilliant, she had the political *salon* of her day, and was in a position to tell the history, political and social, of the time, with the intimate accuracy of one who was practically a part of it, the confidante of others besides Hamilton.

So tremendous a hold did this story and the personality of the woman take on my mind during those long nights and days and several that succeeded, that I identified myself with her, and I had the maternal passion in all its primitive simplicity. I told this story over and over to myself—always in the first person, be it remembered—always expanding and embellishing, until I was as much a figure in that bygone time as Alexander was himself. The consequence was that when the discoveries of the future compelled me to relinquish this elaborate piece of fiction, my mental attitude remained, and although obliged to forego the pleasure of telling the story in the first person, yet I almost unconsciously told it much as, during that memorable interval, I had expected to tell it.

I returned to St. Kitts, and the next day my searcher appeared and informed me that he had found James Hamilton. It was noon, but I flew to the Court House. The James Hamilton discovered died eighteen years before Alexander was born. I dismissed the expert and went on by myself. Although I had found and heard enough to interest me deeply, I cannot say that I was encouraged. In spite of the most brilliant sunshine that I had ever seen and the vast expanse of hot-blue sea before my window, I felt as if groping in the dark between stone walls. The mystery

seemed to deepen, and so many of the records were lost. I was a generation too late for personal memories. Indeed, I had to approach the old people with the utmost tact. If I did not begin by asking them if they remembered hearing their grandfathers speak of Hamilton, they invariably regarded me sourly, remarked that they had not been alive a hundred and fifty years ago; and had to be placated. But I was now to have my first ray of light.

The records of St. Kitts are in a better condition than those of Nevis, and the indexes are in separate volumes. But they were not to be found all at once, and my progress was rather slow in consequence. I went through them as they came to hand and found Lyttons, Stevensens, and Mitchells without end. After reading the history of St. Croix, and of the invitation given by the Danes in 1733 to the planters of neighboring isles, and the church registers of the island, it was easy to see what island they had drawn upon for the larger part of their population. I read documents relating to these people, but was still unilluminated. At last, however, I found the second link in my chain. In the third or fourth volume I came upon the entry, "Fawcett to Hamm." I thought the clerk would never find the volume to which it referred, and when he did it was the most evil smelling and evil looking of the lot. Its pages were almost black, they broke and crumbled as I touched them, and the handwriting was diabolical. Even the pages were misnumbered, and I was obliged to resort to a study of margins before I saw again those words, "Fawcett to Hamm." For at least ten minutes I could make nothing of that cryptogram. It was a mere orgie of twirls and flourishes, letters twisted, and letters upside down. I called to the Registrar and clerk to help me, but they were busy. I was in a fine state of excitement, for I *felt* that, could I pull those flourishes apart, I should find the key to my mystery. Finally, I deciphered the first few lines. It was a deed of trust. Substantially, it began thus: "I, Mary Fawcett, widow, of the Island of St. Christopher, desiring to provide for the future of my three dear slaves, Rebecca, Flora, and Esther, transfer them to my friend Archibald Hamm, or to his heirs; they to remain in my possession during my lifetime, to pass thereafter to my beloved daughter, Rachael Lavion. . . ."

For the moment it seemed to me that Rachael Levine rose from

the page. She was as alive to me then as when I wrote of her later. And I was the only person living who knew the name of Hamilton's mother. The misspelling of her name did not disconcert me, for the spelling of the entry, as far as I had read it, was of an equal excellence with the handwriting, and in most of the deeds I had studied one name would be spelled in as many different ways as inferior education could devise. That I had found Hamilton's mother I never should have doubted even had I discovered no further evidence. The Registrar and clerk joined me, and together we deciphered the rest of the document. I have given the substance of it in my book. It was dated the fifth of May, 1756—eight months before the birth of Alexander Hamilton. I gathered that Mary Fawcett knew that Hamilton could not marry her daughter, and had her own reasons for wishing to provide for the future of her favorite slaves.

I turned that Court House upside down in my determination to find the will of Mary Fawcett. There were times when I felt that I would barter my immortal soul for the light it would give me. Were it not that they welcome any excitement in the West Indies—I am told that the other islands are jealous of Martinique—their amiability might have failed them. As it was, they were nearly distracted. They all called me "Mrs. Hamilton," and once the Registrar came forward with his hand at his head exclaiming: "Mrs. Atherton, what have you done to me? Here I am making out an important paper for Mr. Justice ——, and I have written 'Mr. Justice Hamilton!'"

But not another item could I find. Many of the records were chips between their rotting covers. Others had wholly disappeared. Mr. Mercier, on whom I could wholly rely, once more searched the records of Nevis. I was obliged to give it up. I examined the church registers, and the minutes of Council, and then set sail for St. Croix.

In Fredriksted I found nothing. Its last army of rioting negroes had burned the records, but I had looked for little there, and in a day or two I crossed the island to Christiansted. Here I was forced to endure inaction for several days. I had made up my mind to begin with the church registers; and the Anglican clergyman, Mr. Watson, was away. The Common Records, of course, were in Danish, and I did not know how to go to work upon them. Our consul had recently died—a Hamilton enthusi-

ast, worse luck!—and no new one had been appointed. The widow of the consul, although an American, was the only antagonistic person that I met in the Islands. I called upon her with a proper introduction; but she must have concluded that I did not look like an author, for she regarded me with suspicion, said she had never heard of Hamilton, and remarked that she was not responsible for the conversations her husband may have indulged in when away from home; he never had talked of such matters with her. Chaste soul! She may have heard that Hamilton was illegitimate.

During these days of waiting I passed some unquiet hours. Every instinct convinced me that I had found Hamilton's mother, but my proof was by no means sufficient to convince others, and the Miss Hamilton story followed me even here. In an old Danish dictionary I found the bald statement, that Hamilton was the son of a Miss Hamilton. It must be remembered, also, that I had not found James Hamilton, and that there are no libraries of standard works in these Islands. Could I have passed those long days with the volumes of Hamilton's "Works" containing his correspondence, I should have been saved much wear and tear of mind. These not only contain a letter from James Hamilton to his son, dated from St. Vincent, but Hamilton's correspondence with his relatives in Scotland; after his fame had induced them to look him up. In the "History of the Republic," also, there is a letter from Hamilton to his brother James—then living on St. Thomas—relating to their father. But, so far, I was still greatly in the dark. Not in despair, however, for I have a theory that anything can be found. It merely depends upon the endurance of the hunter.

Christiansted was beautiful enough to divert any mind, and I found that it had carefully preserved the memory of Hamilton. The store—Mr. Cruger's—in which he worked, is pointed out to all visitors, and the beautiful apartment above, occupied by Mr. Quin, the first citizen of the town, is called Hamilton House. I was guided to an aged slave who had lived with the Mitchells at the time of the emancipation, but she could tell me of little but their wealth and subsequent poverty. I learned, however, that the Mitchell of the time in which I was interested had been a slave trader, and his big stone store on the corner of Strand and King streets is in as fine a state of preservation as Cruger's. But to-day

there is not a person on the island bearing the name Mitchell, Cruger, Lytton, Stevens, Hamilton, or Knox.

Mr. Watson returned and immediately took me to his house, where the registers of St. John's Church were kept. They were in admirable order and reached back to 1761. Mr. Watson sat down to one volume and I to another. Here were nearly all the names that I sought. My people, judging by the number of times they stood sponsors, and the state in which they were married or buried, were the great of the island. It is remarkable how much one can learn of the social history of a place from its church registers. These seemed to gossip. And here was Hugh Knox at last. Among others I found this entry: "James Towers and Ann Knox on the 8th of May (1787) by virtue of license at the Rev. Hugh Knox's house," as well as the information that Mr. Hugh Knox and Miss Yard stood sponsors to a little Knox in 1815, November the 17th. It will be remembered that one of the Yards of St. Croix is mentioned in the extract from the Pickering MSS.

At last, in another and older volume, I came suddenly upon the following entry—under the year 1768:

"Rachael Levine, Feb. 26, at Mr. Tuite's Plant., by D. O., aged 32."

Again it seemed to me that I saw the woman. The faded characters written on the day of her interment, nearly a century and a half ago, might have been a volume. But I know the dangers of imagination when one is searching for facts, and after I had stared at the notice until I could hardly see it, I went on. Who was Mr. Tuite? Why should she be buried on his plantation? Shortly after I came upon the notice, "James Lytton, Aug. 12, at Mr. Tuite's Grange plantation, aged 67." And again: "James Lytton, Jan. 16, 1777, at Mr. Tuite's Grange, aged 11;" and Mary Lytton interred on the Grange estate in 1778, aged twenty-two months.

It will be remembered that Peter Lytton was supposed to be the husband of one of Hamilton's aunts. According to these records he was the son of James Lytton; and his brother, James Lytton, Jr., according to the same records, married Christiana Huggins of Nevis. Their family burying-lot was on the Grange estate, which at one time they must have owned. Naturally, when Rachael Levine died in their midst she was buried with her kinspeople. The great families of the time all had their private

cemeteries. Mr. Watson sent us out to the Grange estate in his phaeton that same afternoon. It is now the property of the government, and the man who rents it told me that, although there was the ruin of a chapel on the estate, and although they had come across more than one grave among the cane, there was no sign of a cemetery. On a hill immediately adjoining the estate, I found the picturesque ruin of a little graveyard which I craved to appropriate. It contained one imposing box tomb, with an illegible inscription and several broken headstones. The wall was in a similar state of decay. Three sides were uneven and crumbling, and the fourth had been rooted up by the arms of a banyan tree and crushed in a fast embrace. I did all I could to annex this burying-ground to the old Grange estate, and by writing to Denmark and by obtaining the exact acreage of the estate, past and present, I did find that to-day Grange is about a half acre short; but I was not justified in assuming that this particular hill was the lost half acre, and I could obtain nothing more definite. Indeed, I am afraid the hill was a good deal more than a half acre away.

My next object was to find the records of the church in which Hugh Knox must have preached, for I was convinced that he had baptized Hamilton. I was told that, being a Presbyterian, he would have preached in the Lutheran Church, and I accordingly called on the Lutheran minister, Mr. Lewetz. He told me that the registers had disappeared long since but might be in St. Thomas. Then I turned my attention to Government House. They told me that all the old records had been sent to Denmark and were in the archives at Copenhagen. So I returned to the church registers, made a thorough study of them, and found, among many other enlightening entries, that "Peter Levine, son of John Michael and Rachael Levine," had got himself baptized in 1769, a year after his mother's death.

I crossed over to St. Croix and sought out the Lutheran minister. He very kindly hunted through some old chests in the cellar of his church, but found nothing that I wanted. He told me, however, that the clergymen had always been obliged to send to Government House a record of every birth, marriage and death, and at Government House the Secretary told me that all such records were in Denmark. Immediately after my return to America I was put in communication with a reliable person in Copenhagen

who searched the few records of St. Croix that have been rescued from fire and damp and worms. He could find no mention of Knox or Hamilton, but a good deal about John Michael Levine, the Lyttons, and the Grange estate. Meanwhile, I had learned all there was to know about James Hamilton and had received from our consul on the island of St. Vincent a certificate of his interment notice, made out and signed by the Archdeacon, E. A. Turpin. It was not long after that I found the last link in my chain.

I had read the first volume of J. C. Hamilton's "Life" of his father, but had not wasted time on the second, as it was all in the "History of the Republic." But one day in the Lenox Library I took down the volume and glanced through it. Almost immediately—on page 7—I came upon the following in a letter from Hamilton to General Greene, dated October, 1782: "I take the liberty to inclose a letter to Mr. Kane, executor to the estate of Mr. Lavine, a half-brother of mine, who died some time since in South Carolina." The rest of the letter was familiar. I turned hastily to the same letter in the "Works." This paragraph with other matter had been omitted, doubtless for the sake of its room. It is quite likely that none of the other biographers of Hamilton had seen it. As for the spelling of the name, it is more than probable that in the original letter it was written Levine, and was incorrectly copied. But not only was it the last bit of evidence needed, but it might have been deliberately written as a sequel to the register of St. Croix.*

GERTRUDE ATHERTON.

* The impression given by Hamilton's other biographers is that he was about five years old when his mother died. According to the register of St. Croix, he was eleven. Mr. Richard Church afterward told me that Hamilton told his father, Philip Church, that he was eleven when his mother died.

Mr. Watson had the page of the register containing the interment notice of Rachael Levine, photographed, and a copy is now in the possession of the Society of Historical Research of New York.

It is stated somewhere in J. C. Hamilton's work that Hamilton's mother was living on St. Christopher when she met James Hamilton. Doubtless Hamilton told the whole story to his wife, who instructed her son, with discretion.

If James Hamilton left his mark on any of these Islands it was recorded in the volumes which have disappeared.